

2016 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Committee

The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Committee wrapped up its work on October 21st, with a total project cost for 2015 of \$400,000. This represents a \$15,000 decrease from the 2014 schedule.

New Boston's CIP Committee works to develop a six-year schedule of capital projects and purchases that reflect the town and school needs as well as the taxpayers' ability to afford.

Through the use of Capital Reserve Funds (CRFs), taxpayers have supported yearly allotments for fire and highway vehicles and equipment as well as bridges, preventing huge spikes in the tax rate for the year these expensive items need to be funded.

The CIP schedule represents projects and purchases that cost \$20,000 or more. Unless there is an unforeseen emergency, any new project comes onto the schedule six years out.

It is expected that the Selectmen will bring forward to the March 2016 ballot the CIP items scheduled for that year. Voters are encouraged to consider these requests carefully.

Over the years, the CIP Committee believes departments have been judicious in bringing forth only what is truly needed, not "wish list" items. Additionally, the Committee feels the costs reflected represent sound estimates. These estimates are fine-tuned as the year for their inclusion on the ballot arrives.

The projects on the CIP schedule have been discussed for many years and reviewed in the newspaper as well as the annual Town Report.

Fire Department Vehicles CRF

This yearly CRF includes both replacement and mid-life refurbishment of all Fire Department vehicles except the ambulance, which is purchased through a separate, non-taxpayer ambulance fund.

The vehicles include two front-line pumpers and a preowned pumper at the Hilltop Station, a tank truck, a hose reel truck, a forestry truck and a light rescue vehicle.

All of these vehicles are extremely expensive, with pumpers costing upward of \$600,000. One issue pushing their cost is the need for a custom truck that will fit into our smaller fire station.

Luckily, with a midlife refurbishment, these pumpers generally have a 25-year life cycle. The other vehicles also have 15 to 30 year cycles. While this is good on one hand, it makes projecting future costs problematic.

The 1991 pumper was scheduled for replacement in 2016 at an estimated cost of \$632,000. However, based on the current condition of the truck and feedback from our mechanic and pump service, the Fire Wards feel it is prudent to add another three years to its replacement schedule.

The CIP Committee carefully reviews this schedule yearly, attempting to account for any known increases in vehicle costs. The CRF contribution of \$110,000 is recommended to continue.

Fire Station Bond

After voters approved the purchase of land beside the post office, the Fire Wards have organized a building committee headed by Wayne Blassberg to put together plans and an estimate to bring forward to voters. The cost for a four-bay building is expected to be approximately \$2.6 million.

The Fire Wards presented preliminary plans to the CIP Committee and discussed their initial strategy. While the Fire Wards initially thought they might be ready for the 2016 ballot, the CIP Committee unanimously felt the project should not be brought forward until 2017. This would allow time for solid estimates and education of the public on the need for the project.

It is possible that a warrant article for engineering costs will be included on the 2016 ballot.

NBFD Breathing Apparatus

Fire Chief Dan MacDonald presented this critical self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) as a new CIP item. The department currently has 22 units, but will increase that to 24. Each unit is also required to have a spare bottle. The cost for each unit is \$7,000, for a total cost of \$168,000.

The CIP Committee agreed to place the item at year 2021 as required for new additions. Chief MacDonald said that they are currently working on grants to help offset this cost to the town.

Highway Dump Truck CRF

Due to a \$20,000 increase in the cost of the 6-wheel dump trucks, this yearly CRF needs to increase from \$70,000 to \$85,000 for 2016; and increase again in 2017. This fund now covers six full-sized 6-wheel dump trucks (\$260,000), one smaller 6-wheel truck (\$125,000) and one 10-wheel truck (\$295,000).

Replaced trucks are often kept as spare plow trucks. For the past several years, Road Agent Dick Perusse has had good success in finding preowned trucks as our replacements at great savings to the town.

However, the CIP Committee unanimously feels the CRF needs to contain sufficient funds to purchase new trucks if necessary.

Highway Heavy Equipment CRF

This yearly CRF remains the same at \$50,000. The CRF covers the replacement cost of the grader, loader and backhoe.

The 2005 Loader, at an estimated cost of \$210,000, is tentatively scheduled for replacement in 2017.

Road Improvements

For the past few years, this \$85,000 yearly allotment has been applied to upgrades on Old Coach Road. This yearly funding of roadwork is one of the things that has prevented New Boston from needing multi-million dollar bonds to repair severely deteriorated roads.

The work planned for 2016 is on Dougherty Lane, replacing the bridge and getting that section of road reopened.

Bridge Repair/Replacement CRF

This yearly CRF will remain at its current funding of \$40,000.

Scheduled for 2016 is the replacement of the culvert on Lyndeborough Road that begins at the entrance to Towne's Gravel Pit. Road Agent Dick Perusse has received detailed estimates for all the work involved with this \$67,000 project. Funds will be taken from the CRF to cover the work.

Upcoming projects to be funded by this CRF are the large Bedford Road culverts at Foxberry Lane (2017), repairs to Howe Bridge (2020) and Tucker Mill Road bridge (2023).

Highway Salt Shed

The Road Agent again wants to push this project back, potentially asking voters' approval for funding in 2017 and 2018. He continues to work on refining the cost as much as possible.

Property Update/Reval Funding

The next update of town-wide property is scheduled for 2016, with the more expensive full reval in 2021. The previous \$20,000 will increase to \$30,000 to collect for the full reval.

NBCS Addition Bond

New Boston Central School Principal Tori Underwood and School Board Chairman Wendy Lambert met with CIP. They requested the bond amount remain on the schedule, but that it be pushed out until 2018 to let them see if the lower numbers predicted by the demographic study hold true.

Transfer Station Food Waste Composting System

In 2014, Transfer Station Manager Gerry Cornett introduced a mechanical food waste composting system for the CIP schedule. The proposed system would cost approximately \$140,000.

However, there have been some big changes, with the cost of getting rid of solid waste decreasing. Mr. Cornett will continue to watch some programs in other towns and report back next year as to whether to leave the project on the schedule.

CIP Committee

Brandy Mitroff, Chairman, Finance Committee Representative

Ken Lombard, Finance Committee Representative

David Litwinovich, Planning Board Representative

Christine Quirk, Selectman Ex-Officio

Matt Beaulieu, At-Large

Fred Hayes, At-Large

Jon Strong, At-Large